

Fono 1: Communication Activity Instructions **(20 minutes)**

Introduce Fono 1: Communication activity

Now we will be doing an activity that will help us *tauhi vā* (Tongan) or *tausi vā* (Samoan). By using open communication, we will nurture the relationships that connect us to each other. This activity will be a place to begin to help us feel confident about how to talk more openly about infant mortality with our community.

Review the fono rules for the discussion. (2 minutes)

Review the *fono* rules to prepare for the discussion. Additional rules may include respect for privacy of others and not sharing what is said outside of the group.

Conversation ball activity. (5 minutes)

Explain that this activity will loosen everyone up to speaking openly. Have everyone hold up their right thumb. Tell them when you catch the ball to answer the question that your right thumb lands on. After answering the question, toss the ball to another person. (See smarterparenting.com for more information)

Create a safe space activity. (10 minutes)

Fofola e fala (kae talanoa e kāinga) is a Tongan metaphor that means, “roll out the mats (so the kin can dialogue).” It describes the act of creating a safe and healthy space for dialogue to occur. (10)

'O le 'upega 'ua fili i le pō 'ae tatata i le ao is a Samoan metaphor meaning, “the fishing net can only be untangled in the daylight.” It teaches that family and community issues can only be sorted out when brought to light and discussed openly. (11)

The create a safe space activity invites open dialogue. It is done in pairs with two people who are familiar with each other. Pairs choose one person to start. Everyone hears an incomplete sentence. The first person restates the sentence with their own ending to their partner. The partner restates the same sentence with their own ending. Sentences start off simple and then go deeper to more difficult topics. Go in order. Demonstrate with your co-facilitator using the example sentence. Have pairs put their workbooks away, go to a private space, and face each other when talking. Explain the rules again and begin.

Example sentence:

Your best characteristic is ...

Sentences to use:

Your most attractive feature is ...

You help me be a better person by ...

You make me smile when you ...

I love you because ...

When you are in pain, I feel ...

When you need help, I want you to ...

I can talk to you about anything because ...

Discussion (2 minutes)

Ask the group to share what they experienced.

Conclusion (1 minute)

Explain the different levels of communication. Some things are easier to talk about than others. It is easier to talk about the weather than to tell someone you care about them or admit you need help. In the conversation ball activity, we talked about easier topics like your favorite food or movie. In the “create a safe space activity,” we practiced saying things that are sometimes harder to express like trust and concern for someone. The way we approached this activity gave you a safe space and purpose for talking about these more difficult topics, which you might have never talked about before. We can create safe spaces like this among our families or friends to start talking about more sensitive topics like infant mortality.